

Please substitute the following for the current Abstract:

ABSTRACT

A punching tool for green sheets or similar sheet-like work-pieces having a support plate with punched holes (7), and a holding-down plate disposed above the support plate and containing stripper openings (24). Operative portions (23) of dies (8) extend through the stripper openings (24) and are guided therein. The operative portions (23) are formed in graduated form with a punching portion (26) of reduced diameter. Each punching portion (26) has a length that is less than the length of the stripper opening (24), and is located entirely in the stripper opening (24) when the die (8) is at its top dead center. A part (25) of the operative portion (23) protrudes into the stripper opening (24) to guide the die (8). The punching portion (26) is only approximately as long as required for the punching stroke of the die (8). The slight length of the punching portion (26) makes possible an especially slender punching portion, and thus the creation of especially small punched holes.